Development of Rural Tourism Hubs in Tamil Nadu

4304. SHRI S ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have identified any sites in the State of Tamil Nadu for their development as Rural Tourism Hubs; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including the steps being taken for the development of the sites and by when they are likely to be opened for public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Under the Rural Tourism scheme of Ministry of Tourism funds are sanctioned and released based on the proposal received from the State/UT Governmets for infrastructure development at Rural sites Based on proposals received from State Government of Tamil Nadu the funds have been released for the development of following rural tourism sites in the State:

(i) Rs. 50 lakhs for Kazhugumalai in 2003-04
(ii) Rs. 50 lakhs for Theerthamalai in 2003-04
(iii) Rs. 50 lakhs for Chhettinadu in 2003-04
(iv) Rs. 20 lakhs for Karaikudi in 2004-05
(v) Rs. 20 lakhs for Kahugumalai in 2004-05
(vi) Rs. 50 lakhs for Devipattanam in 2005-06
(vii) Rs. 50 lakhs for Thirukurungudi in 2005-06

Development of Rural Tourism Hubs in Andhra Pradesh

4305. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have identified any sites in the State of Andhra Pradesh for their develpment as Rural Tourism Hubs; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including the steps being taken for the development of the sites and by when are likely to be opened for public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Under the Rural Tourism scheme of Ministry of Tourism funds are sanctioned and released based on the proposal received from the State/UT Governments for infrastructure development at Rural sites. Based on proposals received

from State Government of Andhra Pradesh the funds have been released for the development of following rural tourism sites in the state:

(i) Rs. 50 lakhs for Pochampalli in 2003-04
(ii) Rs. 50 lakhs for Konaseema in 2003-04
(iii) Rs. 50 lakhs for Puttaparthi in 2004-05
(iv) Rs. 50 lakhs for Srikalahasti in 2004-05
(v) Rs. 50 lakhs for Chinchinada in 2004-05
(vi) Rs. 20 lakhs for Pochampalli in 2004-05
(vii) Rs. 20 lakhs for Srikalashasti in 2004-05

Development of infrastructure to boost tourism

4306. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
SHRI B. J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that by the end of 2004, around 35 lakhs tourists have visited India and it is the highest ever in history;

(b) whether as per estimates of Government, we would have over 2 million visitors between November, 2004 and March 2005;

(c) whether it is also a fact that nothing significant has changed in the infrastructural development to accommodate the rise in tourists; and

(d) if so, what is the action plan of Government to address this issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir. As per the estimated figures, about 33 70 lakh foreign tourists visited India during 2004 which is the highest figure recorded so far.

(b) As per the estimates, about 1.84 million foreign tourists visited India during November 2004 to March 2005.

(c) and (d) A number of steps have been taken by the Government for infrastructure development to accommodate the rise in tourists. States/ UTs have been requested to allot maximum number of plots in their States for construction of hotels. In order to encourge setting up of budget hotels, incentives in the form of capital subsidy are provided to specified category of hotels. In the recently concluded State Tourism Ministers' Conference it was *inter-alia* resolved that States would strive for development of world